
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Property Address:	939 and 941 M Street NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Landmark/District:	Shaw Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent Calendar
ANC:	2F	<input type="checkbox"/> Denial Calendar
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept Review
Meeting Date:	December 15, 2011	<input type="checkbox"/> Alteration
H.P.A. Number:	#11-523 and #11-525	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Brendan Meyer	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

The applicant, owner JR Bailey, seeks concept approval for a twin 2-story brick rowhouses with full story mansards at 939 and 941 M Street NW in the Shaw Historic District. Plans were prepared by Workhsop T10.

Property Description and Context

The existing two lots have been vacant since designation of the historic district in 1999. The surrounding historic context is almost exclusively found on the side of M Street shared with the project site. The south side of M Street across from the site is dominated by large scale new construction. The historic rowhouses are of a varied range in terms of period of construction and style. Immediately adjacent to the site are two c. 1890 brick rowhouses of similar form and style. Both are brick with arched punched openings and a projecting bay up to the main cornice. At similar heights the west neighbor is topped by a traditional Washington corbelled cornice and pediment atop the projection, while the east neighbor has a half-story mansard combined with a turret roof.

Proposal

The rowhouses proposed for 939 and 941 are brick veneer twins in a traditional language that echo the patterns, forms and materials of their historical neighbors. A two story main façade will be augmented by a one-bay wide, frame and panel square projection that will share a cornice with the main façade. Above the cast polymer cornice will be a full height mansard roof punctuated by three segmental arch dormers. Roof access behind the mansard will be via a stair monitor massed and masked to appear as a brick chimney from the street.

Evaluation and Recommendation

The HPO is generally quite satisfied with the concept design. The form and massing of the building, as proposed, is typical in dimension and proportion compared to its immediate historic neighbors. Conveniently for the project, the neighbors are approximately the same height, so the proposal for this project to come to the same height works out without have moderate between two different heights. The masking of the roof monitor as a chimney is successful enough to escape immediate attention, but upon study is a massing not out of place on a mansard rowhouse.

Small matters of detail can be worked out to better complement to the overall design. These come down to working closely with the architect to specify trim and window materials and products that will simulate historic ornament and materials to an appropriate standard.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept for twin two-story brick rowhouses with full height mansards at 939 and 941 M Street NW as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act and delegate final approval to staff.

No part of this recommendation shall be construed as a recommendation for approval or disapproval for any necessary zoning relief or interpretation.